

Wilderness Battlefield Coalition

July 8, 2008

H. Lee Scott, Jr.
President and Chief Executive Officer
Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.
702 SW 8th Street
Bentonville, AR 72716

Dear Mr. Scott:

I am writing on behalf of the Wilderness Battlefield Coalition, an alliance of national, regional and local organizations with an abiding interest in the preservation of the historic Wilderness Battlefield in Orange and Spotsylvania counties, Virginia.

The groups constituting the Wilderness Battlefield Coalition have serious concerns regarding the Wal-Mart Superstore proposed for a 55-acre parcel in Orange County, north of the intersection of Route 3 and Route 20. Although this 145,000 square-foot store is not within the congressionally authorized boundary of the Wilderness Battlefield, it is within the historic limits of the battlefield. In addition, the proposed Wal-Mart Superstore will increase development pressures on the nearby National Park and play havoc on traffic in the region.

The Battle of the Wilderness, fought in early May 1864, was one of the largest and most important battles of the Civil War. It marked the first clash between legendary Civil War generals Robert E. Lee and Ulysses S. Grant. The battle also initiated Grant's famous "Overland Campaign" that exhausted both armies and took the Union forces to the gates of Richmond.

For two days, bloody fighting raged along the Orange Turnpike (present day Route 20) and the Orange Plank Road. More than 160,000 men were engaged in the struggle at the Wilderness. The see-saw battle culminated in attacks that first had the Confederate Army, then their Union counterparts, teetering on the edge of destruction. When the guns fell silent on the evening of May 6, nearly 29,000 Americans had been killed, wounded or captured.

The Wilderness Battlefield was determined to be one of the most historically significant battlegrounds in the nation by a blue ribbon panel created by Congress in 1990. In an exhaustive 1993 report, the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission (CWSAC) identified Wilderness as a Priority I, Class A site, its highest designation. The commission identified the 55-acre parcel as part of the Wilderness Battlefield.

Today more than 2,773 acres of the Wilderness Battlefield are preserved as part of Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park. This Super Wal-Mart would be built within one-quarter mile of the National Park and would pave the way for desecration of the Wilderness with unnecessary commercial growth. Such a large-scale development is inappropriate next to a National Park.

Letter to H. Lee Scott, Jr.

Page Two

July 8, 2008

Orange is a beautiful county with a remarkable and distinctive rural character. Any major development in this vicinity would impair the rural nature of the area and would increase traffic dramatically. In January 2007, the Orange County Board of Supervisors adopted language into the county's Comprehensive Plan stating, "It is the intent of the county to discourage development that would necessitate the construction of a four-lane highway over any portion of [Route 20] in Orange County." This Superstore would increase pressure to expand Route 20 to four lanes through the Wilderness Battlefield. That expansion is unacceptable to this coalition. We are very interested in seeing the transportation study for this parcel once it has been conducted.

The Comprehensive Plan also recognizes and embraces the importance of maintaining the county's rural character by limiting growth and promoting the preservation of historic areas. Allowing a large commercial site virtually contiguous to a preserved piece of hallowed ground like the Wilderness Battlefield does not protect this valuable historic resource.

Thank you for taking into consideration our concern for historic preservation and conservation in Orange County. If you have any questions, please contact Jenny Cross of the Civil War Preservation Trust (202-367-1861 ext. 224) or Dan Holmes of the Piedmont Environmental Council (540-672-0141).

Sincerely,



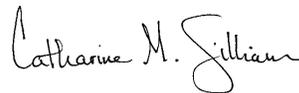
Jim Lighthizer
Civil War Preservation Trust



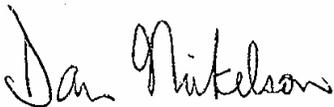
Dan Holmes
Piedmont Environmental Council



Rob Nieweg
National Trust for Historic Preservation



Catharine Gilliam
National Parks Conservation Association



Dan Nickelson
Friends of Wilderness Battlefield



John Cummings
Friends of the Fredericksburg Area Battlefields

Cc: Thomas C. Kleine, Esq., Troutman Sanders LLP
Orange County Board of Supervisors
David Grover, Orange County Director of Community Development
John Nau, III, Chairman, Advisory Council for Historic Preservation
Kathleen Kilpatrick, Director, Virginia Department of Historic Resources
Russ Smith, Superintendent, Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park